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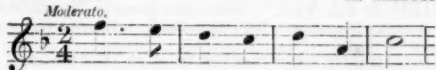
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## CONCERTS IN VIENNA.

"*Des Teufels Lustschloss*, a natural magic opera in three acts, by Kotzebue. The music is by Franz Schubert, m.p., pupil of Herr Salieri, Imperial and Royal Court Chapelmaster in Vienna." Such is the title-page of Schubert's autographic opera score, now in the possession of the Countess Anna von Amadei, one of our first lady musical amateurs. The celebrated old Court Chapelmaster, under whom Beethoven, also, transiently studied, without learning anything, was for a short time Schubert's master for composition. Ignorance and calumny have greatly wronged him ("Is it true that you poisoned Mozart?" Rossini asked him very naively); but he at least deserves the credit of zealously and unselfishly interesting himself in young talent. He was, it is true, far advanced in years when Schubert went to him for instruction, and, moreover, as a genuine Italian, not at all fitted to understand, far less to direct, Schubert's talent. The description: "Pupil of Herr Salieri" on the title-page, is an evidence of pleasing modesty. The opera was composed in 1814, that is in Schubert's seventeenth year. The management of the Komische Oper in the Schottenring at one time contemplated bringing it out, as it had never been performed. But the plan appears to have been wrecked on Kotzebue's absurd libretto, which works up what is certainly the most disagreeable of all kinds of comicality, namely that which is inseparable from dread and horror. The knight, Oswald, his bride and his servant, go through the most fearful adventures with spirits in the enchanted castle; they are dragged by persons dressed up in various disguises through every conceivable kind of suffering and danger, being finally conducted even to the scaffold! When, at the command of the executioner, they have already laid their heads upon the block and bid each other for ever farewell, the owner of the castle appears and informs the poor wretches who have been almost frightened to death during two acts and a half, that it was all a joke, which he has carried out by the aid of machinery and servants in disguise. Instead of giving the playful personage a good cudgelling, those who are thus enlightened are much moved and thank him. The theatrical public of the present day would scarcely consider it amusing to see for the whole evening ghosts, executioners, and so on, and then be informed at the very end that their anxiety was a piece of stupidity. Now, we cannot strip the book off a complete operatic score, as we take off a coat and have a new one made. Our witty friend, Grandjean, has, we hear, undertaken to alter Kotzebue's libretto, substituting for the capricious mystification by machinery, and so on—a dream, which is, at any rate, a more natural and more poetic motive. Whether much is gained by this for stage purposes we cannot say. Side by side with a great deal that is antiquated and unimportant in Schubert's score, we have come across so much that is delightful, so much that is truly Schubertian for its melodic freshness and marked character, that the idea of a stage performance does not really strike us as so very hazardous. With *Des Teufels Lustschloss* our managers would, at all events, not sow more trouble and earn more disappointment than with many of their other novelties. Only a few words about the overture, which Herr Kremser, the director, introduced to us at the last Society Concert. A well-nigh violent dramatic vein runs through it. We ask ourselves whence the young composer obtained such romantic strains, which make our blood curdle, at a time when there was no *Faust* by Spohr, and no *Der Freischütz*. The incisive dissonances with which the overture begins so jauntily, the repeated and luridly flashing infernal lights and the demoniacal grimaces, the low-sounding intermediate movement with *sordini* (almost a presentiment of the *Euryanthe* overture), and then the surprising employment of the three trombones—all this may be exceeded by the devilry of our most modern operatic music, but is something wonderful in the seventeen-year old "pupil of Herr Salieri, Imperial and Royal Court-Chapelmaster."—The next piece was a rather long cyclical composition by Herbeck, *Lied und Reigen*, the last he ever conducted himself. A master of sonorous choral writing and effective scoring, he has decked out this series of musical pictures with pleasing, interesting touches. As a whole, however, the work is deficient in convincing power. As a series it wants the homogeneity which would cause us to feel that the separate pieces naturally belong to each other, and are organically developed. Most of the contrasts and effects ranged in succession strike us as far-fetched and springing from a palpable striving

after the "Poetical." Premeditation is very apparent in the "Traurige Kermess," an attempt to reproduce Sterne's sentimental humour, or the humour of Shakspeare's clowns. Let any one compare with this piece Schumann's "Armer Peter," which renders with such truth and simplicity a similar mixed feeling. The serious ending, too, of the whole, the slow dying-away of the two strophes given by the watchman, whom Herbeck posts first in the middle and then at the back of the concert-room, is conceived theatrically rather than musically. But the intended effect of this new device is not attained in the concert-room; the piece sounds flat and unsatisfactory, almost like a disappointed expectation. The difficult choruses in the work had been very carefully studied, and were executed by the Vocal Association with delicate nicety of light and shade. Herr Walter sang in an especially beautiful manner Pylades' air from Gluck's *Iphigenia*. But, had he been the Greek Pylades himself with Orestes, in flesh and blood, by his side, the air ought not, on any account, to have been repeated, considering the formidable length of the concert. Some of the benches were already empty, with Brahms' Pianoforte Concerto, and the whole of Mendelssohn's *Christus* fragment still to be performed! We have heard M<sup>me</sup> Toni Raab, who was set down for it, play the Pianoforte Concerto far better on previous occasions. It was evident that this virtuosa on the piano was suffering (as we all were) from the bitter cold prevailing in the concert-room, and, in addition, she had to struggle with the shrill, sharp tone of an altogether unsatisfactory "Grand." Brahms' Concerto, which ended at half-past two, was followed, as already mentioned, by the fragment of Mendelssohn's unfinished oratorio, *Christus*. Like many others, I had looked forward with delight to this magnificent composition, and yet, like many others, I left before it came on, incapable of absorbing any more music at one sitting. So long a concert renders performers as well as audience inattentive, fatigued, and ill-tempered, and, as a matter of course, sacrifices the concluding number, which unfortunately is, as a rule, the best in the programme.

EDUARD HANSLICK.

## SALVATION.\*

(Sacred Song for Music.)

Salvation! Oh Salvation!  
There is music in that word.  
It holds all that our hearts would say,  
And delights us in this world.  
It lends us vigour in the morn,  
And in the evening peace,  
It is a song that ever brings to us  
Sweet messages of bliss.

Angelic ears are by it ravished,  
In their wondrous home above,  
And our Father listens to it  
With complacency and love.  
To be saved! what can it be?  
Who can say? who can tell?  
No ear hath ever heard,  
No eye on it can dwell.

It means to live for ever  
In the bosom of our Lord,  
To be lighted with His glory,  
And to see His Face adored.  
It means a long, eternal rest,  
In an unimaginable home,  
To share in endless rapture  
The promised land and throne.

\* Copyright.

JOANNA ENRIQUEZ.

MDME NILSSON IN MADRID.—A correspondent writes:—"M<sup>me</sup> Nilsson's *début* as Margherita in Madrid appears not only to have been one of the most brilliant successes heretofore accorded in the annals of the Teatro Real, but to have elicited a unanimous and enthusiastic tribute of admiration from the musical and dramatic critics of the Spanish capital. King Alphonso, with his fair young Queen, attended by the chief personages of the household and a brilliant staff, occupied the State box, in which they took their places a few seconds before Gretchen's first "entrance," in the second act of *Faust*, and their Majesties heartily joined in the plaudits with which M<sup>me</sup> Nilsson was received by an audience composed of the *fine fleur* of Madrid society. The unusual warmth of her welcome is partly to be attributed to the circumstance that, with characteristic generosity, she sang gratuitously on the first night of her appearance in Madrid, the proceeds of the evening's performance being devoted to the relief fund raised to benefit the sufferers by the recent inundations in Murcia.—*Daily Telegraph*.

## RACINE AND MUSIC.\*

(Continued from page 736.)

## III.

Previously to this last performance of Gossec's version, Boieldieu, during his sojourn in Russia, from 1803 to 1811, composed fresh music for the choruses, which were sung by one hundred singers of the Imperial Chapel at a solemn representation given of *Athalie* at St Petersburg by Mlle Georges, and the composer used frequently to speak to his friends about the admirable effect produced by these hundred voices selected from among the most sonorous of the Ukraine, "the province of fine voices." But the success obtained by Boieldieu's music excited the jealousy of Mlle Georges, who had not undertaken the journey to Russia in order that the airs set by a fellow-countryman might be applauded, and she refused to continue playing *Athalie* with such a result. When he returned to France, Boieldieu did not like to produce his work in public, for fear of appearing to set up as a rival to Gossec, whom he esteemed as much as liked. It was not till four years after his death that the choruses were executed during an extraordinary performance, on the 29th May, 1838, at the Comédie-Française, for the benefit and last appearance of Mad. Paradol, who wished to bid farewell to the public in a character which had long been hers. The performance began with *Athalie*; then came *Le Legs*; a *Pas de Deux*, by the Sisters Elssler; and *Le Devin du Village*, sung by Roger, Dérivis, and Jenny Colon.

Boieldieu's posthumous work comprises an overture and four choruses, and the following is the way in which a critic expressed himself with regard to each of these numbers, after stating his opinion that the score, regarded as a whole, struck him as broader in treatment and more severe in style than the same musician's previous works, a fact which, he adds, would seem to prove that Boieldieu had gone through a stricter study of his art in St Petersburg than he had in France: " . . . The overture, in F minor, is somewhat in the style of those affixed at that period to melodramas, then in high favour. It is an *allegro agitato*, somewhat overwrought, and not possessing much of the Biblical character desirable in the preface to so grandiose a work as Racine's. The chorus in C minor, terminating the first act, is very fine, though still rather too much in the same tone. Fault, too, might be found with it for the frequent repetition of the perfect cadence leading back incessantly to the original key, but nothing can be better written for the voice. Boieldieu has here exhibited broader and more highly developed ideas than was his wont. "O saint Temple! ô David!" is a piece abounding in grace and tender melody. The chorus which joins in with Joad's inspiration in the third act is full of spirit and dramatic vigour. "Le Seigneur a daigné parler" is almost an air standing out in the midst of the choral mass; it is sung in a remarkable manner by Mme Walkin. The last chorus, at the end of the fourth act, has more movement and modulation than any of the others, but it was not the one which produced the most effect or was best executed. It contains a melody of exquisite sentiment, in A minor, commencing with the words: "Tristes Restes de nos Rois!" All this was given by forty-two chorus-singers, men and women, supported, or, rather, dominated, by twelve children, with sharp, shrill voices, producing an exceedingly fine effect. This choral mass, picked up here and there, *de brie et de broc*, to use the vulgar expression, that is to say: from among the chorus-singers of the Théâtre-Italien and the Paris churches, worked very satisfactorily together; we were very near them, and can assure the reader that these fifty-four chorus-singers would, perhaps, have displayed more confidence had they not been disquieted by the much too noisy fashion in which M. Habeneck, who, it is said, had not condescended to rehearse the music he was chosen to conduct, beat time on his desk."†

*Athalie*, with Boieldieu's choruses, was given four or five times again at the Théâtre-Français, and then, in consequence of the ne-

cessity of making way for a novelty, *Louise de Lignerolles*, the members of the company removed to the Odéon, so that they might continue playing Racine's tragedy, with Mlle Gausain in the place of Mad. Paradol. But these eight or ten performances, already so remote, have not rendered Boieldieu's music at all familiar; and as, after all, it is always interesting to hear anything by a composer of Boieldieu's importance, even when the subject treated by him seems only moderately suited to the nature of his talent, it is to be hoped that the Conservatory, in default of the Français or the Odéon, will provoke a comparison very interesting, to say the least, for the serious public, by some day doing for the *Athalie* of Boieldieu what it has on several occasions done for the *Athalie* of Mendelssohn.

After Boieldieu comes Mendelssohn, and, after Mendelssohn, M. Félix Clément, whose choruses were executed for the first time by the artists of the Opera, in the Salle Sainte-Cécile, in March, 1858. As, with this gentleman, the composer hardly exists apart from the author, he has himself been able to give some explanation as to the manner in which he conceived his own work, while judging the other *Athalie* scores brought forth before or afterwards. He lays particular stress on the fact that he wished merely, by means of harmony and melody, to render Racine's verses more penetrating, and colour his thoughts more vividly, without substituting for them the independent work of some one else; he reminds us, moreover, that of all the musicians who have derived inspiration from *Athalie* he alone has written his choruses in the strictest conformity to the poet's intentions, exclusively with female voices, and without introducing among the fair young Israelites "male tenor and bass voices, which would certainly have frightened them very much;" he attributes, lastly, the licence taken by all the composers before and after him to "the difficulty of keeping up the interest during the long development of a choral work of this description when the composer has none save female voices at his command."

It strikes me that it is well nigh impossible to resolve on principle the question here opened up, which I think is one of those where results prove more than the best reasoned theories; in a word, without undervaluing the interest and the difficulties presented by an attempt of this sort, it seems to me exceedingly difficult to blame those musicians who have treated Racine somewhat more freely. There are excellent reasons to be adduced on both sides, and, if M. Clément's exceedingly strict system is self-defending, the liberties taken by other composers are to be explained and justified with nearly equal facility. M. Clément is literally and absolutely right, and, as Racine wrote in his preface:—"This chorus consists of maidens of the tribe of Levi, and at their head I place one whom I make Zacharie's sister; it is she who introduces the chorus at his mother's; she sings with it, speaks in its behalf, and, in a word, discharges the duties of that personage in the ancient choruses who was called the coryphæus," it is manifestly absurd to mix up youths with these girls. Racine's intention is very clear; but it was violated, however, at the very outset, perhaps with Racine's assent, and certainly under circumstances where the addition of male voices was more inexplicable than it could ever be at any other time, since all the characters in the tragedy were then sustained by young unmarried girls. Besides, Racine intended his sacred tragedies to be always played by such, and never thought those works would be transferred to the regular stage. Yet, has there, on that account, been any hesitation in having Abner, Joad, and Mardochée performed by men and real tragedians? The plan initiated by Moreau, and sanctioned undoubtedly by Racine, suffices to excuse all the composers who have followed the example thus set, without in the least diminishing the merit of those who may wish to proceed otherwise; and, while fully approving those who respect Racine's original idea, we must not censure those who take advantage of the modifications permitted by the poet for the benefit of the musician.

Very similar, though long posterior, to M. Clément's score is that of M. J. Arnould, which, like the one first named, has not been performed on any stage, but which is conceived in a like spirit, and written also for three equal voices, without the addition of any male singer. M. Arnould has set literally all the choruses in *Athalie*, not omitting a single strophe and following the tragedy line for line; this is tantamount to saying that he neglects the oath of Azarias, the favourite tirade of all musicians, bent on merely producing an effect, even in opposition to common sense,

\* From *La Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*.

† *Gazette Musicale*, 3rd June, 1838.—The article is by H. Blanchard, who was not always gentle, as may be seen by the final stroke, and who, moreover, objected to the kettle-drums because they were too noisy, and to the trumpets because they were nearly the fourth of a tone too high; *little things*, he said, very disagreeable to persons who have at all exercised their feeling for music; *little things* against which a conductor should always be on his guard.

the sole licence he has taken being to repeat his first chorus, "Tout l'univers est plein de sa magnificence," at the fall of the curtain. He might justify himself, if necessary, by the example of Mendelssohn. The crime, however, is not a great one; but, though we can easily understand that a musician may add to the end of the tragedy some musical conclusion or other, just as it was preceded by an introduction of which neither Racine nor Moreau had ever thought, it is not to be admitted with equal facility that, in the course of the piece itself, a tirade which the poet deliberately puts in the mouth of a single Levite should be cut up so as to be sung in chorus. M. Arnoud's score is recommended by genuine qualities of treatment and declamation, qualities which, while essential to every musical composition, are of primary importance and almost preferable to melodic invention when all we have to do, as in the case of Racine, is to strengthen the rhythmic power of the verse by that of the music, to emphasize its expression, and to heighten its colour. The vocal parts, simply treated, correctly prosodised, and free from wearisome repetition, are sustained by invariably careful harmony, and by ingenious arrangements. The author may sometimes impart too theatrical a character to his pieces by the style of the accompaniments, while, on other occasions, the praiseworthy desire which he always exhibits to write very simply for the voice, may be exaggerated, as in the chorus, "O divine, ô charmante loi!" but such transient exaggeration on one side or the other results from an excellent intention, namely, that of supporting Racine's poetry by melody noble but severe in character—and carefully cleared of all commonplace redundancy, and of all ornamentation savouring of bad taste.

(To be continued.)

#### A MILD WABBLE ABOUT WABBLING.

(From the "Cincinnati Wabblers.")

The pure female voice is fast disappearing from the opera, the concert, the performing church choirs, and all other places of pretentious singing. We mean not the voice of the pure female, but the pure voice of a female. It is fast degenerating into that shaking palsy, which is sometimes called the tremolo, sometimes the vibrato, but which is more correctly described by the vernacular term, wabbling. Singers accepted as *prime donne* in opera practice this wabbling till they cease to have a single correct note. Such shallow tricks and meretricious ornaments are always more quickly imitated than any correct manner, because this affords an easy way to sing like an opera singer. Fond mammas think their girls are quite up to *prime donne* when they get this shaking palsy. The soprano of a performing quartet, set up before the congregation as in the concert or minstrel hall, and reducing this affair, which is satirically called worship, to a performance, "executes"—that is the apt word—solos in this shaking palsy, whose high aim is to degrade the godlike human voice to the mechanical twitter of a canary bird. The probability is that the generation which shall be borne from this time on shall never hear the pure female voice, nor know what it is, save in some unsophisticated mother's lullaby, or in very primitive congregations on the frontier. The Italian opera, which should be an elevator of the tastes of the people, corrupts it, and the progress which we boast so much is to the acceptance of this shaking palsy as high art. Nor is it of women alone. The same wobble has grown greatly among men singers in the opera during the last twenty years, and thus all singing is getting shattered. A high taste for music is not diffused among any people outside of Italy. There may be a few in every large city in the circuit of the opera who are competent to judge, and who have distinct ideas, but the number is much less than is commonly fancied, as any one can find by observing the audiences. The greater number find a sort of dull interest in the spectacle, the dramatic action, the general crash of voices and orchestra, the sight of a much advertised *prima donna*, without any distinct notion of anything, save that it is the fashion to go.

This condition of the people does not encourage the highest attainments in the singer's art, but it gives a chance to captivate in an easier way by false ornamentation. So corrupted has the public taste become by this that it tolerates and even applauds such a wabblers as \* \* \* who in a whole opera never strikes a correct note, scattering herself all round the note, like a charge of bird shot. She has no distinct note, only a blur. She can make runs by semi-tones or quarter-tones as well as by whole tones; nobody can tell which they are, for they have no single tones. In florid music she makes no articulation of notes; it is simply a mixing up of all—a muddle. Add to this her strokes of tremendous

force in the prolonged high notes, on which her voice becomes a scream, and a manner of drawing out some particularly favoured low notes into a prolonged howl, like somebody's last strain in "Baby Thine," and the total is about the worst that has yet been set before opera-goers as a standard for cultivation in music. But this singer goes down the public throttle, and most of those that rank lower are cultivating the shaking palsy more or less. We suppose that the time is coming when if a singer shall attempt to sing in opera, or on the concert or church stage, in a true or pure voice, it will be as much out of character as if a circus performer should ride seated in a saddle instead of standing up and turning somersaults through hoops. Probably we shall have to submit to this universal corruption, but it shall not be without a protest. And we have to remark that if the Cincinnati College of Music shall assist in this degradation of the human voice, lightning ought to strike it, or the earth open and swallow it, or some equally mild but effectual corrective ought to be applied to this sacrilege.

Your Beethovens, your Cherubinis, your Meyerbeers, your Halévy's, aye, even your Verdi's—but, before all, your Wagners—are answerable for this. How often must we say that the "tremolo" is not voluntary, but involuntary, the result of bad early training, or of the screaming and dwelling upon high notes, to the detriment of the middle and lower registers. No one does it purposely, and no one, either vocalist or auditor, thinks it—as poor Molière used to say—"quite beautiful."—D. B.

#### MALVERN'S GAY SUMMIT.\*

By MORRIS (J. BIRD) OF THE LINK.

"On Malvern's gay summit, so rural and sweet,  
Where young Men and Maidens for Pleasure do meet,  
You view at your Leisure those murmuring Hills,  
That gently are gliding from sweet Malvern Hills.

A Prospect commanding so distant to View,  
Those Prospects you have will for ever seem new;  
The Serpentine River our pleasure to fill,  
Which we view from the Summit of gay Malvern Hill.

Ascending this Hill, you may view with delight,  
Old Gloucester's famed City, and Cheltenham in Sight;  
No Prospect is equal, I'll own with it still,  
To those we behold upon Malvern's high Hill.

The different Counties display'd to your sight,  
A prospect of Worcester, that place of Delight;  
While gazing Abroad you may view Over's Mill,  
From off the Summit of sweet Malvern's Hill.

A Prospective View of North Wales it displays,  
The fair Town of Radnor if strictly you gaze,  
Fresh Prospects anew in our Minds 'twill instil,  
If you view all around from sweet Malvern Hill.

On a clear Summer's Day, when the Sky quite serene,  
The Shipping in King's-road is plain to be seen,  
You Upton and Tewkesbury may view at your will,  
While gazing from off Malvern's lofty high hill.

To the Eastward we view Bosworth's gay plain,  
Renowned by Battle, where King Richard was slain;  
The Flying Fish, too, we behold on Broadway Hill,  
From off the Ascent of noble Malvern Hill.

Thus Prospects anew on this Hill to be found,  
You see at your Leisure while viewing around,  
The Water much fam'd by Physicians of Skill,  
That's found underneath Malvern's high Hill.

Had I all the riches of matchless Peru,  
To revel and roam, as most emperors do,  
I'd forfeit them all with a hearty goodwill,  
To dwell in a cottage near Malvern's high Hill.

This beautiful place shall have great renown,  
And rival in health the big London town:  
For a man may live as long as he will  
On the lofty heights of Malvern Hill."

\* Written a century and a quarter since.

Wagner's *Meistersinger von Nürnberg* has been performed at the Grand Ducal Theatre, Darmstadt.

### Blackwood on the Stage.

There was an old "Maga" called Blackwood,  
Which each Caledonian hack wou'd

For a place in its pages,  
Where 'gainst Whigs he rages,  
And any old Tory's shoes black would.

—*Dilettante Curtain-Lifter.*

The fact that the more important magazines and serials commence to take notice of modern theatrical performances is in itself a good sign. It proves that matters have vastly improved during the past decade. The time is not very long since a professedly literary organ which stooped to notice the modern drama at all, would do so simply for the purpose of pointing a moral or supplying an illustration wholly damaging to the pretensions of modern art. Like the helots pointed out to the Spartan children, our theatres showed only what was to be avoided. Times are now altered, and modern pieces and modern performances receive serious criticism in publications that a generation ago would scarcely have opened their columns for such a purpose. Altogether, apart from the value of the opinions expressed, essays upon the stage which appear in important periodicals are thus of value. In this, indeed, lies their chief merit—it is but rarely they supply information or views of any special importance. Those who follow attentively the drama through all its manifestations, and love it well enough to keep their fealty to it even when it is discredited, are likely to be better judges than those who on the strength of more refined tastes withdraw altogether from it. There is in the present month's number of *Blackwood* an essay upon theatrical reform, *à propos* of the revival of *The Merchant of Venice* at the Lyceum. This essay illustrates the argument we advance. It is the work of an able and a clear-sighted man, but of one who has closed his heart or his intellect against all new impressions. So distinctly does he show the influences to which he is subject, we are only restrained by delicacy and the kind of consideration due to anonymous journalism from revealing his name, which, from purely internal evidence, we ascertained before we had read half-a-dozen pages.

We shall not mention the name, nor shall we state such particulars as lead directly and inevitably to discovery. We will point the writer out, however, to himself. He is one who—now very many years ago—took a keen interest in dramatic work and dramatic exposition, and who based upon what then was done views of art which have since crystallised, so to speak, and are incapable of change. Not an inconsiderable factor in the sum of dramatic success, or such measure of it as was obtained, in a period of which the country is not especially proud, he has been divorced from the drama through the fact that he has fallen under the power of an intellect and a volition stronger than his own. Every human motive that is most potent, then, has influenced him to render himself unjust to modern art. Vanity, affection, and a dozen other things, all operate upon this writer to persuade him that at a certain period the history of the stage broke off, and that the golden or silver age then ceased. With much cleverness, with his old acuteness of perception, and with amusing speciousness, he defends his conviction that we have no actresses. When he ceases to attack he advances sound opinions concerning the drama and acting. So plausible, indeed, is he, those who look upon his paper as the work of an absolutely unprejudiced man might be misled by his opinions. We are not so misled. We remember the good times to which he turns back, and we know the artists with whom, in his opinion, closed the book of histrionic art. We tell this writer, this anonymous writer, that his interests, his prejudices, and his affections have blinded his judgment, and that we have actresses as good now as we had thirty years ago. Here is the kind of nonsense which under such influences as every one would recognise, were they as sure as we are of the authorship, he is prompted to write:—

"It was no less than pitiable, for example, to see how people, who profess to be learned in matters of art, went mad over the feeble performances last summer of Mlle Sarah Bernhardt. Surely it was not necessary to have seen great actresses to make one indisposed to recognise in that lady the qualities which go to make them. Without the power to feel more deeply, and to think more nobly than ordinary mortals, actresses can never be great. They may not be able to write poetry, or even to put what they think and feel into plain prose—that is a special faculty. But they

must have the intuitions, the imaginative sympathies, of poets, otherwise they cannot live into, and look and be, the beings whom the imagination of poets has created. Their own lives, their own aspirations and habits of thought, must be congenial with those of the heroines they have to impersonate, or how will they command the looks, the movements that are to satisfy the eye, or still more the inflections of voice that are to thrill the heart, but which cannot move unless they vibrate from the inner depths of the speaker's soul? Spenser's words are as true as they are beautiful—

'Yes, of the soul the body form doth take,  
For soul is form, and doth the body make.'

Who that knows what the lady we have spoken of is—and unhappily the incidents of her life have been too liberally trumpeted—will venture to expect in her the 'ethereal qualities that touch the heart,' the power of impersonating woman in her highest and most heroic aspects, as the outcome of such a nature and such a life."

Now there is as much sense in this as in the old and famous illustration, "Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat." Carry out this preposterous theory that the lives of actresses must be congenial with those of the heroines they have to impersonate, and you arrive at a *reductio ad absurdum* whichever line you take. How can the life of the same woman, her aspirations and habits of thought, be compared at once with Desdemona and Lady Macbeth, with Imogen and with Phèdre? How can we ever expect to meet women who can play such characters as Regan and Goneril? Who would dare to ask an actress to impersonate Cressida? The same rule must, of course, apply to men, and you must find some moral monster to play Iago. Not for a moment does the author of this nonsense—who, by the way, except for his pardonable monomania, is a sensible man—attempt to justify these ludicrous assertions. For the reference to the life of an actress—wholly unpardonable, we think, and scarcely, if at all, short of an outrage, since it has always been the practice to dissociate the art of the artist from his general life, especially in the case of women—it is as absurd as unjustifiable. We do not know what the life of the lady is, yet we know as much of the stage as the writer of the essay. We do not take for granted, however, all that is said concerning a lady. We ask our censor, since he chooses to deal with such matters, whether, on the evidence that reaches us, Rachel, who was assumably the greatest artist he stage has seen, had the exquisite virtue necessary to fit her for playing such a character as, let us say, Pauline in *Polyeucte*. What actress is there of past times, on any stage, whose reputation for purity and beauty is such as to make her our ideal of any Shakspearean character? What the writer, perhaps unconsciously to himself, means to say is this: there has been only one great actress, and all who came after her, and most who went before—though that is of less consequence—are impostors. That the writer may have been fortunate enough to have exceptional opportunities of knowing all that was sweet, graceful, and attractive in the actress in question, is a matter on which he is to be congratulated. His loyalty to her is a natural and defensible attitude; the only thing against it is that when he gets upon his hobby people laugh in their sleeves, and we have personally regard enough for him—for we know him—to be sorry to see him put it in the power of men less than himself to make merry at his expense. When, however, he wishes to establish a monopoly in art, and when, through an organ as potent as *Blackwood*, he assails—for it is nothing less—an actress like Mlle Sarah Bernhardt, and holds up to contempt those who dwell upon her art, it is time to bid him hold his hand. The most respectable sentiments do not justify assault. Our views upon the writer's morbid jealousy and vicarious vanity are, no doubt, indefensible in his eyes, but they do not justify him in pursuing us with lethal weapons, or pouring out in actionable phrase his contempt. What we have quoted concerning Mlle Sarah Bernhardt is altogether indefensible; we are not quite sure that it is quite gentlemanly, reluctant as we should be to charge the writer with such an offence. The following criticism is inaccurate, but does not surpass the limits of the permissible. We quote it as a specimen of what our author can find to say:—

"But to descend from this higher ground to the lower level of mere physical attributes, where in her are those qualities of person, the unstudied grace of motion which belong only to a symmetrical and finely-poised frame; the plastic features to reveal the working of thoughts and emotions as they rise; the resonant voice, which can

be drawn upon at will to express every varying shade of feeling, from the most winning tenderness to the wildest bursts of passion? These are the requisites without which no actress can be entitled to claim rank with those who have made the stage illustrious. Where are they to be found in the meagre form, the hard, immobile face, the voice of a few notes of Mdlle Bernhardt? We speak not of the other qualities to be found in a great actress—the utterance which seems to grow out of the thought or emotion of the moment; the absorption of self in the woman sought to be portrayed, so that not for an instant are we allowed to think of the actress as apart from her; the unstudied effects of gesture and motion which come with the impulse of the scene. Where these are not—and assuredly they are not to be found in the monotonous and carefully-studied poses of Mdlle Sarah Bernhardt—we decline to bow down and worship genius in what is no more than a practised cleverness, an aptitude for picturesque effect within a limited range, and a command of the ordinary resources of art, so far as can be taught."

We have not dealt with other errors in the paper, although it is full of errors. It is no mission of ours to defend a man like Mr Irving from the criticism he is so well able to sustain. Much of what is said, moreover, about masculine actors is true and well said. It is our duty, however, to protest against the notion that one artist is to be placed in a position to menace and frown down all subsequent effort. It is not right that an artist like Mdlle Bernhardt should be attacked because she is not in Mr So-and-so's estimation up to the moral level of Perdita or Miranda. We have nothing to do with the private lives of artists, and a man of honour should hesitate to accept statements, however positive, to the disadvantage of a woman. Who now even stoops to pick up stories concerning Rachel? As for the notion that *Blackwood* has been the means of advancing that lives and aspirations of artists must be in keeping—or, to be exact, congenial—with the characters they play, it is the most preposterous proposition that has for many a year been put forward to mislead or to amuse mankind.

J.—H. K.—t.

#### MUSIC AT BOULOGNE-SUR-MER.

(From a Correspondent.)

A Grand Concert Spectacle, given by Captain Voyer, took place at the Salle Monsigny on December 10th. As regards the Spectacle I can only record the fact that the artists of the local troupe did their best to please in *Un Mari dans du Coton*, and *Le Meurtier de Théodore*. The Grand Concert was a treat, and I am sure, when you see the programme, you will agree with me it is a well selected one.

"Concert Stück," piano et orchestre (Weber); Charmant Ruisseau, romance chanté par M. Pagès (premier ténor au théâtre); Le Printemps and La Fileuse (Mendelssohn), in the programme—Le Capitaine Voyer; Cavatine de Cinq-Mars (Gounod), chantée par Mdlle Jeanne Andrée; Marche Funèbre (Chopin), Menuet de la Croix d'Alcade (Perry); Etude en la Mineur (Thalberg)—Le Capitaine Voyer; Grand Air des Dragons de Villars, chanté par Mdlle Béla; La Muette de Portici (Thalberg)—Le Capitaine Voyer.

Captain Voyer is an accomplished amateur pianist, who distinguished himself on the battle field of Gravelotte, was made prisoner at Metz, left the French army to devote himself to music, and is now making a concert tour in his native country. Next year he visits Belgium, and may be tempted to cross the Straits. He was made officer of the Legion of Honour for services in the field. For a long time after the war Captain Le Voyer gave his services as a pianist on behalf of Ambulance charities, and I need hardly tell you his talent was appreciated when he was prisoner in Germany.

I must mention with special praise the rendering, by Miss Horlock, a young English lady gifted with a fine voice, of an "Ave Maria," by one Battmann. Though young, she has mastered sufficient courage to sing at the Cathedral. Her upper and lower notes are especially good, but the middle register lacks that force which can only be attained by constant practice of the scales.

At the Theatre *Ruy Blas* was a success, performed as it was by a Parisian company. Since then we have had *Le Droit du Seigneur*, by Vasseur, which in London did not "go." It goes here, and at the sixth performance on Sunday the house was crammed. In this, a young lady, known to the Boulonnais, when a child, as the daughter of an old director of the theatre and

conductor at the Casino, made her *début*, under the name of Jeanne Andrée. Though very young, Mdlle Andrée is possessed of a fairly rich voice (not over strong), which she knows how to use with advantage; she has also considerable merit as an actress.

*La Petite Demoiselle* has been played twice, but did not draw. Heavy drama in the shape of *La Poissarde*, *La Bouquetière de la Reine*, &c., have filled up the gaps, on Sundays and off nights.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, 17th Dec.

X. T. R.

#### MACFARREN ON A QUESTION OF ORGANS.

(From the "Maidstone Standard.")

THE ORGAN IN ALL SAINTS' CHURCH.—A distinguished musician now follows up the letter of the distinguished architect, but we doubt whether either has had perfectly correct data before him. Professor G. A. Macfarren writes to Mr Gilbert Scott:—

"On the question proposed to me, I think that if the object be to lead congregational singing, or, more properly expressed, to drown the inaccuracies of unskilled vocalists, a large, coarse-toned organ may be highly desirable. If the object be to produce the effect of musical beauty, by judicious accompaniment of a trained choir, then an organ of moderate power, but of good tone, and with full pedal compass, is very greatly to be preferred to a larger and louder instrument, which no player with a real feeling for his task would use at the full for such a purpose. If a sum of money be contributed for musical ends in any church, I believe it would be far better applied in some investment that would yield an annual fund to be spent upon choir-training than on the increase of an organ, inasmuch as it would lead to the efficient performance of admirable compositions, and the taste of hearers as well as of executants would thereby be exalted. This opinion, being framed more upon general principles than upon experience in Church music, is offered with diffidence, but I believe it would have the concurrence of persons better versed in this particular branch of the subject than myself."

#### THE NYMPH OF THE SILVER CREST.\*

SONG.

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|---|--|
| <p>I.</p> <p>The sun is o'er the blue wave glancing,<br/>Edging with fire its heaving breast,<br/>Yon light bark now so slow advancing,<br/>So silent on the billows dancing,<br/>Is with a beauteous burden blest—<br/>The Sea-Nymph of the Silver Crest.<br/>The wind is still, no breath is blowing<br/>The white sail of her bark to move;<br/>Yet hands of maids unseen are rowing,<br/>And the Isle to which the Nymph is<br/>going</p> <p>'Tis the fair Isle of the coral grove,<br/>The happy Isle of joy and love.</p> | <p>II.</p> <p>Here eyes with gentle hope are beaming,<br/>And fix'd upon her flagging sail;<br/>The crest is on her forehead gleaming,<br/>And round her bosom idly streaming<br/>Like summer cloud, or silken veil,<br/>Her darkling locks invite the gale.<br/>Come from thy cave, thou breeze of<br/>ocean,<br/>When the panting heart's at rest;<br/>Follow the bark with gentle motion,<br/>That the sigh of the Nymph's<br/>devotion, [the West,<br/>Which heaves for the lonely Isle of<br/>May with the smile of joy be blest.</p> |
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\* Copyright.

WELLINGTON GUERNSEY.

THE NEW CONSERVATOIRE.—The statement published by some of our contemporaries to the effect that the Royal Academy of Music and National Training School for Music have come to an understanding with regard to the long talked of amalgamation, is not borne out by facts. At a meeting of the Royal Academy directors on Saturday the 13th inst., the query advanced by the promoters of the amalgamation, in a letter from Prince Christian to Earl Dudley, as to "whether the Academy are willing to surrender their present Charter and receive a new one," was answered by a majority in the negative—on the principle, it may be presumed, of "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." The Royal Academy of Music was never in a more prosperous condition; sixty-eight new pupils have been admitted during the present term, while many applications for admission have been inevitably refused. Since 1868, when the cession of the Charter was, for certain reasons, offered by the representatives of the institution themselves, and the offer being declined by the Crown, the Professors, at considerable sacrifice, took matters into their own hands, and at their own personal risk, its fortunes gradually rose, the number of pupils being now nearly seven times what it was. With regard to the proposed amalgamation we venture upon no opinion. Those immediately concerned must be the fittest judges of their own interests.—*Graphic*.

## MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS, ST JAMES'S HALL.

**TWENTY-SECOND SEASON, 1879-80.**

DIRECTOR—MR S. ARTHUR CHAPPELL.

**THE SIXTEENTH CONCERT OF THE SEASON**

Will take place on

**MONDAY EVENING, JANUARY 5, 1880.**

To commence at Eight o'clock precisely.

### Programme.

#### PART I.

QUARTET, in E flat (Posthumous), for two violins, viola, and violoncello (first time)—M<sup>me</sup> NORMAN-NERUDA, MM. L. RIES, ZERBINI, and PIATTI ... .. Mendelssohn.  
SONG ... .. Herr HENSCHEL ... .. Beethoven.  
VARIATIONS, in C minor, for pianoforte alone—M<sup>lle</sup> JANOTHA

#### PART II.

TEMA CON VARIAZIONI, for pianoforte and violoncello—M<sup>lle</sup> JANOTHA and Signor PIATTI ... .. Mendelssohn.  
SONG ... .. Herr HENSCHEL ... .. Haydn.  
QUARTET, for two violins, viola, and violoncello—M<sup>me</sup> NORMAN-NERUDA, MM. L. RIES, ZERBINI, and PIATTI

**THE EIGHTH SATURDAY POPULAR CONCERT OF THE SEASON,  
SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JAN. 10, 1880.**

To commence at Three o'clock precisely.

### Programme.

QUARTET, in E flat, Op. 74, for two violins, viola, and violoncello—M<sup>me</sup> NORMAN-NERUDA, MM. L. RIES, ZERBINI, and PIATTI ... .. Beethoven.  
AIR, "Revenge, Timotheus cries"—Mr SANTLEY ... .. Handel.  
SONATA PASTORALE, in D major, Op. 23, for pianoforte alone—M<sup>lle</sup> JANOTHA ... .. Beethoven.  
SONG, "Thou'rt passing hence"—Mr SANTLEY ... .. Sullivan.  
TRIO, for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello—M<sup>lle</sup> JANOTHA, M<sup>me</sup> NORMAN-NERUDA, and Signor PIATTI ... .. Haydn.  
Stalls, 7s.; Balcony, 3s.; Admission, One Shilling. Tickets to be obtained of Austin, 25, Piccadilly; Mitchell, 33, Old Bond Street; Olivier, 58, Old Bond Street; Lamborn Cock, 23, Holles Street; Stanley Lucas, Weber & Co., 84, New Bond Street; Keith, Prowse, & Co., 48, Chesapeake; M. Barr, 80, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.; Hays, Royal Exchange Buildings; and at CHAPPELL & Co.'s, 69, New Bond Street.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. C.—Thanks for the "*sit*," which (according to Dishley Peters) should come after "*dictum*"—not before.

### MARRIAGE.

On the 23rd inst., at St Thomas's, Portman Square, by the Rev. Charles J. Phipps Eyre, M.A., Rector of St Marylebone, assisted by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, M.A., Chaplain-in-Ordinary to the Queen, Sir JULIUS BENEDICT, to MARY COMBER, eldest daughter of Henry Fortey, Esq., Inspector of Schools, Madras Presidency.

HENRI WIENIAWSKI is dangerously ill in Moscow, but, according to recent advices, not dead, as was reported.

It is said that H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh has withdrawn from the committee of the Royal Academy of Music.

HEINRICH SCHLESINGER, the well-known music-publisher of Berlin, has just died in that city, aged seventy-two.

ADELINA PATTI sang lately at the Theatre Royal, Munich, with such brilliant results that the management entreated her to give an extra performance.

THE terrible passage from England in the *Scythia* and the excitement caused by her *debut* at the New York Academy, together with the extraordinary enthusiasm of which she became the object, proved too much for the nerves of M<sup>me</sup> Marimon, who succumbed. Her second advertised appearance was thus inevitably postponed, and another opera substituted for the *Sonnambula*. Notwithstanding certain slight differences of opinion in the press, chiefly warmed up, it is said, by the exclusive admirers of M<sup>me</sup> Etelka Gerster, that M<sup>me</sup> Marimon is just at this moment the chief talk among operatic circles in New York is an unquestionable fact. How long this may last, however, remains to be seen. Her next part is to be Dinorah.

To ADVERTISERS.—The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs DUNCAN DAVISON & Co.'s, 244, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyll Street (First Floor). It is requested that Advertisements may be sent not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.

## The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1879.

### Winter Night Sketch.

*A withered and bent old man  
Was pottering along beneath  
The cold arcade. There ran  
A draught in quick keen breath  
Which hadn't come from the south.  
A short clay, quite gone out, he had in's mouth.  
I wondered whether his pipe  
Had been put out by the fall  
Of a drop (when it was ripe)  
Such as now hung not small  
From nipped nose—there it drops.  
Every now and then he looked at the shops.  
And though one neared and neared,  
He pattered on without heed,  
His fireless pipe in his beard.  
Then I inwardly said, "Indeed"  
"Winter himself must this be."  
And could have hugged him, so dear is Winter to me.*

Polkaw.

RUE DE RIVOLI.

WE make no apology for introducing to our readers, through the medium of translation, a very remarkable letter contributed to the leading paper in Hanover by Dr Hans von Bülow, on Herr Anton Rubinstein's new opera, *Nero*, recently produced with great success at Hamburg:—

### A NERO-LETTER.\*

BY HANS VON BÜLOW.

We have to do here neither with the Empire-Dog, Nero, nor with the Roman predecessor—left unrescued by the late Adolph Stahr—of Haussmann, the Prefect of the Seine, but with Anton Rubinstein's new opera, the very exceptional success of which in Hamburg, at the first performance on the 1st November, and at the fourth on the 9th of the same month—both under the composer's own direction—I had the good fortune to witness. I abandon myself to the agreeable hope of not seeing especial doubt thrown on my right to pronounce an opinion, because I am deficient in the so-called impartiality from which people often expect a certain amount of antagonism.

I went, then, to the performance favourably prejudiced, because, and, likewise, although, I was already acquainted with the work from the pianoforte arrangement. I say "although," for, when reading the work, I found much which not merely startled and disquieted, but actually repelled me—yes, repelled me, as is the case with every "unclassical" individual, who, besides his great qualities, must cultivate certain mortal peculiarities the more sharply the more productive he is.

Many of my doubts during the reading were silenced and overcome by the performance, which, lifted by the composer's magnificent mastery as a conductor and the delighted readiness with which the members of the company did their duty, was a thoroughly brilliant one, a proof that, to judge a musical work, a hearing eye is as insufficient as it is, on the other hand, indispensable. Many of the doubts remained, though only in the form of a modest wish

\* From the *Neue Hannover'sche Landeszeitung*.

that something were better or different, but, at any rate, without clashing with the sentiment which I can never help, whenever I differ from him, entertaining towards this composer, namely: that, even in such cases, he touches me much more sympathetically than other musicians do, when I enjoy the privilege of agreeing with them.

Allow me, however, to justify by a few words, my belief in the vitality of *Nero* on the lyric boards. It is a settled fact, which no opposition can weaken, far less refute, that there still reigns among the public a very large demand—with what amount of inward enthusiasm and sincere desire, it is not our province to enquire—for grand operas, the demand being certainly in excess of a satisfactory supply.

Despite of Richard Wagner and Jacques Offenbach, his involuntary colleague in battling with the internationalised Parisian dragon (called: grand opera), the dragon still goes on vomiting forth flames. Look at the well-nigh undiminished power of attraction exercised by Meyerbeer's five-acters. What though *Dinorah* contains much neater and much more purportful music than *L'Africaine*: the average theatre-goer likes to enjoy the emotions and evolutions of the latter—*Circenses*! But—since Meyerbeer, as we know, did not bequeath to Messrs Gounod, Thomas, and Verdi, his genius and skill in the *genre*, and since the sight-loving public, however much they may be in the habit of frequenting the theatre as a sort of regular pothouse (without tobacco and liquor), occasionally require a little change—the deficit-dreading manager is now-a-days not a little puzzled what to do. Otto the Great, as we are aware, has not yet established Imperial-Taste-Unity. The five, or four-act Stuttgart operatic composer is a failure in Berlin; the Berliner, in Leipzig; the Middle-German, in South Germany, &c. Up to the present date, the fatherland has given us in this respect no universally available genius. Goldmark's ultra-Oriental *Königin von Saba* and Hofmann's ultra-Teutonic *Armin*, are less dangerous to Meyerbeer's works than were even the productions of that composer's contemporary, Halévy, who, according to Heine's witty surmise, was paid by Meyerbeer to be his rival, pretty well as in Berlin a vendor of non-genuine Malt Extract acted as an advertisement for him who sold the real article.

It strikes me that with his *Nero* Anton Rubinstein has had the good fortune, I will not say: to put an end to the want felt throughout the Empire, but at any rate to afford it a pleasant rest. I "regret" my total inability to agree with Professor Ehrlich in his verdict on the libretto, written by the French author, M. Jules Barbier with a large amount of *savoir faire*, and far less after the recognised old pattern than are certain favourite librettos "full of incident." I do not feel called upon to give an interesting account of the plot; persons desirous of becoming acquainted with the latter can easily procure the book, and will have no reason for being especially dissatisfied with the German version. It is far superior to the versions we accept without a murmur, every evening, of most operas taken "from the French" (or freely adapted therefrom).

But, though I leave the relation of the "intrigue" to some pen better skilled in elegant literature than mine, I must direct attention to a few of the leading points in the drama. Not only did the composer himself select the subject, but, impelled thereto beyond a doubt by Hamerling's magnificent epic, *Ahasver und Rom*, he suggested to his Paris amanuensis the situation of the first act. The fall of the Heathen and the rise of the new Christian world (the abasement of the proud and the exaltation of the lowly)—the contrast between these two opposites excited his fancy, and he has succeeded in illustrating it most effectively. The instrumental prologue—reduced unfortunately to a third at the performance—contains in *nuce* the poetic programme, and, despite its quasi anti-classical form (not formlessness), might, therefore, appear highly presentable to an educated concert public. The hero himself, despite his undeniable "civil character" as a historical monster, presents some highly interesting points, and is not at any rate more unsympathetic than King Richard III., for instance. We may regard as eccentric and paradoxical, without altogether condemning, the view taken by those who think that, by developing into a scoundrel, Seneca's pupil missed the vocation for which his natural gifts would, with less demoralising surroundings, have qualified him, and that he may be accepted as a *lupus dei* who has become immortally

infamous. At any rate, there is one sympathetic side to Nero's character, and Rubinstein has done his utmost to rehabilitate him in this sense as: Nero, the poet, the musician, and the artist.

The words of the dying Emperor, "*Qualis artifex pereo!*" have, at all events, a less frosty twang about them than the last mountebank's sigh of his predecessor, Augustus. Consequently, there was one passage which moved me deeply in the second act; it is the passage where Nero feels in the humour to sing the pains and the love of Iphigenia (the composer has given him a melody which for noble fervour deserves to be placed side by side with the most beautiful tunes of Gluck), and, while preluding, says to his flatterers:

"O schweigt: Euer Cäsar muss verschwinden,  
Wenn der Sänger erscheint.  
Das Höchste ist die Kunst. Vergesst dies nie!"\*

The brute here rises by his ecstasy to the height of a god, as he does, also, in the third act, when he sings, on the balcony of the Mæcenat Tower, the hymn (another musical gem) for which he has found inspiration in the sight of the conflagration that he has placed on the stage. The gigantic criminal appears, properly speaking, only a gigantic dreamer; drunk with the consciousness of unbounded power over the world which is kneeling before him, he is lost in a kind of over-mundane, and, consequently, extra-mundane existence. In keeping with this is the habitual sub-stratum of irony with which, except in his moments of passionate madness—and it is sometimes mixed up even with these—he very properly regales his suite, and equally in keeping with it is Saccus, a poetaster and, so to speak, Court Demagogue, a personage very cleverly introduced by the author and very happily characterised by the composer. This tenor-buffo is a thorough realist, a heartlessly objective spectator of his patron's greatness and fall. When all the rest have deserted the Emperor on his becoming *nihil*, Saccus alone remains by his side, first aiding him in his flight, which is a failure, and supporting him when he stabs himself, which is a success. The thanks offered on the first occasion he declines with a contemptuous laugh: "No, you have nothing to thank me for; I only want to see how a Nero dies." I thought this short episode highly effective; the Grotesque in the service of the Tragic was the invention of the great William, though it has been so seldom turned to account that it appears brand new, like anything else old and forgotten. It strikes me as meritorious on M. Barbier's part to have constructed his libretto on Shakspearean lines generally. For the deeply moving scene in the fourth act, where the ghosts of all his victims—including the Christian martyrs—appear before the Imperial fugitive hiding in the tomb of Augustus, the analogous scene in *Richard III.* naturally served as a model.

Opposed dramatically to the heroic tenor, Nero, is the barytone, Vindex, Prince of the Aquitani, who in the course of the earlier acts is in danger on several occasions of falling a sacrifice to the Emperor, but at last justifies his name of *vindex* by entering Rome as an avenging conqueror at the head of the Gallic legions. *Cherchez la femme*. Vindex avenges not only Rome—what's Hecuba to him?—but, above all else, his beloved, the Christian Chrysa (first dramatic soprano).

His passion for Chrysa is, properly speaking, the principal stumbling block over which Nero is foolish enough to blunder. Chrysa is the turning point of the plot in the first three acts, with which the drama, strictly so called, ends; the concluding act, which plays several years later, is really nothing more than an epilogue for the benefit of the hero, and I advised the author, instead of entitling his work a "Grand Opera in four Acts" to call it a "Grand Opera in three Acts with a Postlude." Chrysa is the football in the Court cabals of Nero's mother, Agrippina, on the one side, and, on the other, of his more or lessmorganatic wife, Poppæa. She represents the light side of the demoniacal work in a much more attractive and impressive fashion than Vindex, and, despite her tragic end—she confesses to the fiercely raging populace during the burning of Rome that she is a Christian, and suffers martyrdom at their hands—the element of reconciliation. The composer has endowed this sympathetic figure with the richest gifts of his glowing musical fancy; in her duets with the

\* "O, be silent. Your Emperor must vanish when the singer appears. Art is higher than aught else. Never forget that!"

barytone in the first and the third act, and in that with her mother, Epicharis (the latter dramatically a highly interesting and "thankful" contralto part), there is so sweet, so warm, so melodic a charm, that an Italian audience would not let the opportunity for encoring escape them; but the Hamburgers content themselves by first procuring the pieces in question for their domestic grands.

I trust that it will not be taken amiss if I do not here pass in silence over the fact that Mad. Sucher, the representative of the part in Hamburg, struck me as being in every respect the most perfect German operatic singer I have heard for a very great many years past; perhaps not the most genial, but the most ideal, and most genuine. Great praise is due, likewise, to the Nero of Herr Winkelmann. This gentleman is another refreshing proof that real tenors have no more died out than pug dogs, and that it is still possible to combine a stately appearance and animated acting with due attention to time and intonation.\* The admirable performance of the barytone, Dr Krüchl, one would like to see rendered still more brilliantly effective by the addition of the significance as regards individuality and organ of our own—I beg pardon!—of "your" Nollet. As I am not writing a critical notice, I refrain from eulogistic mention of the other artists, who, as I stated at the outset, all did their duty to the best of their ability, so that they might prove themselves worthy the honour of inaugurating a new opera, full of vitality. The composer repeatedly expressed to me with sincere emotion the most comprehensive appreciation of the efforts of all concerned—from the energetic *impresario* down to the willing chorus-singer—to realise in a satisfactory manner his intentions; he regards the honourable way in which his Nero was received in Hamburg as richly compensating him for the treatment bestowed on his *Feramos* in Berlin.

I am acquainted with *Feramos* only through the pianoforte arrangement; the book, despite all the elegance of Rodenberg's style, is decidedly poor. The first act pleases me from a musical point of view, extraordinary well, but the two following strike me as an "uncomfortable" anti-climax. Similar decrescendos and inequalities of style are luckily so rare in Nero that, on the contrary, the third act reaches the highest pitch of lyric beauty, while the fourth contains such treasures of fresh and pregnant notions that even the most wearily inclined spectator will console himself for the fact of supping later than usual. That Rubinstein does not pursue the same path as Wagner is sufficiently well known; he follows one of his own, and he has the right, because he possesses the power, to do so. That he has the gift of melody is proved by his beautiful songs, which have become so popular; that he can score in a sober and masterly way, by his grand symphonies; that he can write effective choruses, by his two oratorios; and so on. Of his dramatic plastic power his Nero strikes me as the most brilliant specimen. May its light soon spread far and wide—the enthusiasm of the Hamburgers will not remain a solitary instance! I do not think I have at all compromised my dignity as holder of a Bayreuth Patron's Ticket by being delighted with, and admiring, Rubinstein's Nero,† for it is my opinion that, in art, no parties should be recognised but the party—not an over-numerous one—of those who do something, and the immeasurably more predominant party of the ignorant and incapable. That the members of the first, no matter what their standard, shall be duly respected is an object which every colleague in art should do his share to bring about, helping, according to his means, by undiminished appreciation of what is of any import, to root out as much as possible whatever is dilettante-like and mediocre.

HANS VON BÜLOW.

Mr Bassford's new American opera is nearly finished. Some of the numbers were recently sung at the residence of Mr Sterling, in Morrisania, N. Y. The words are from the pen of General William H. Morris. There are hits at American peculiarities in the best-natured manner. . . . *Mignon* has been produced at New York by Maurice Grau's French company, including Capoul, Paola-Marié, and Leroux-Bouvard in the leading parts.—*The Parisian*.

\* A side hit, "palpable," for Herr Schott.

† A side apology ("palpable") to Pope Richard at Bayreuth, for presuming to eulogise the work of a musician (Wechwochnytzian) who sets the Pope and his teaching at defiance.

### THE MESSIAH.

The Christmas performances of *The Messiah* in London and elsewhere are now running their course, and attracting the usual crowds of Handel worshippers. To notice any of them in detail is unnecessary; and to say they are, as always, right welcome, is merely to reflect an opinion well nigh universal. Certainly the grand old Saxon has in his Gospel-musical epic preached not only the most eloquent of sermons, but the sermon best fitted to this period of the year. To replace it by any other would be scarcely possible, for there is no other within far reach of it. J. S. Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* is precluded from occupying a similar position by the nature of its constructive design, if for no other reason. It is in six parts, each part intended for use on a particular day—the first, second, and third parts on the first, second, and third days of the Christian Festival; the fourth on New Year's Day, Festival of the Circumcision; the fifth on the Sunday following, and the sixth on the Festival of the Epiphany. *The Messiah*, on the other hand, embraces the earthly career of the Saviour from the Nativity to the Ascension, epitomising, as it were, the entire Christian system; whereas the *Christmas Oratorio* limits itself to the nativity and the circumstances more immediately connected with that portentous advent. Some will insist that *The Messiah* should have ended with the exultant "Hallelujah;" but this would deprive us of the confession of belief in the Redeemer and the mysteries He has revealed, which, together with the sublime chorus, "Worthy is the Lamb" and its pendent, the overwhelming "Amen," constitute so magnificent a climax to the whole, and, moreover, serve as a corollary at once appropriate and solemn. That the time for supplanting and putting aside *The Messiah* is yet far distant, may be taken for granted. Its beneficent influence is still felt and will for generations be felt throughout the length and breadth of the land—*Graphic*.

### OCCASIONAL NOTES.

SIR JULIUS BENEDICT was married on Tuesday morning, the 23rd inst., to Miss Mary Comber Fortey, at St Thomas's Church, Portman Square. The marriage was strictly private, only a few very intimate friends being invited. Sir Julius's best man was Signor Randegger. Miss Fortey was given away by her father. The bride looked charming; the bridegroom hale and happy.

At the Popular Concert of January 5th—first of the new year—we are promised an unknown string quartet by Mendelssohn, which has never before been played in public. This must be the one referred to in Julius Rietz's very carelessly drawn up catalogue, under the head of unpublished compositions, as "Quartet for two violins, tenor, violoncello, in E flat"—which, if a dream has not betrayed us, begins thus:—



On the occasion of Mad. Albani's third appearance at the Pagliano, Florence, the receipts amounted to 18,000 francs.

SIG. BRIGNOLI has unexpectedly been called to join Mr Mapleson's company in New York. All that can be done is to wish him "a happy Christmas" in the New World.

MR WILLIAM DORRELL has gone to spend the Christmas vacation at his residence, Château-Wickham, where, as usual during his periodical sojourns, he will study the agricultural interests of the district, see to the congregational music in the churches, and dispense to his friends the accustomed hospitality. *Hoch!*

HANS VON BÜLOW gave, on the 12th inst., his second concert in Berlin this year for the benefit of the Bayreuth Fund. (*Hoch!*—DR BLIDGE.)

CHARLES GOLDMARK, whose grand opera, *The Queen of Sheba*, has been produced with such extraordinary éclat at Vienna and Berlin, first distinguished himself as a composer by a fanciful violin and pianoforte *Suite*, which promptly obtained public favour, and was performed within a few months of its publication at unnumbered concerts of chamber-music by all the leading exponents of Austria and Germany. Goldmark's delight at the success of his composition was so keen and engrossing that it prompted him to undertake journey after journey to towns in which his *Suite* was announced for performance. He could not hear it often enough, and followed it about all over the Fatherland until his unwearied pursuit of it came to be a standing joke among his musical contemporaries. Upon one occasion the *Suite* was to be played at a concert given in Salzburg by some eminent Viennese artists, and Goldmark accordingly arrived, a few hours before the performance, at the "Europe," where, as is the custom abroad, he was promptly requested to inscribe his name and address in the register of visitors to the hotel. Popper, the violoncellist, who was staying in the house at the time, chanced to cast his eye over the register as it lay open in the bureau of the "Europe." The entry, "Karl Goldmark, from Vienna," at once arrested his attention. Taking up a pen, he appended the words, "with *Suite*," to that modest inscription. When respectful inquiry was subsequently made of the Hungarian composer by the proprietor of the hotel as to "what accommodation he required for his following," Goldmark's perplexity was extreme. Inquiries were instituted, but in vain, until the perpetrator of this extremely telling *jeu de mots* cleared up the mystery by fathering his jest. Thenceforth, Goldmark religiously abstained from stalking his *Suite* as it travelled triumphantly through many lands.—D. T.

\* Excruciating.—DR BLIDGE.

#### CONCERTS.

MR JOHN CHESHIRE gave a concert at the Eyre Arms Assembly Rooms on Friday evening, December 19. Mr Cheshire played a duet on Irish airs, for harp and piano, with Mrs John Cheshire, the "Fairies' Dance" of Parish Alvars, his own fantasia on *Marta*, and, again with Mrs Cheshire, his "Patriotic" duet on old English airs, for harp and piano. Mrs Cheshire's solo performances were Thalberg's "Moise" and Benedict's "Where the bee sucks." The singers were Mrs Frances Brooke, Mdme Laura Baxter, and Mr Bryant. Mdme Baxter, who received a hearty welcome, was encored in Henry Smart's "Lady of the Lea," and so unanimous was the applause that she was compelled to repeat it. Mr Bryant was similarly complimented in "Alice, where art thou?" Herr Lehmeier accompanied the songs with his accustomed ability.

SCHUBERT SOCIETY'S ORCHESTRAL CONCERT.—Herr Schubert's talent as a violoncellist is well known, but those who, at the Orchestral Concert (Pimlico Rooms) of the Schubert Society, on Wednesday evening, the 17th inst., saw him conduct an orchestra, composed entirely of amateur gentlemen, must have felt convinced that his mastery of the "baton" was at least equal to his mastery of the "bow." To direct an orchestra of professors is difficult enough; but to direct one composed of amateurs is more difficult still. Herr Schubert, however, not only knows how to wield the conductor's stick but to read—a matter of equal importance. Rarely has an amateur orchestra played Haydn's 12th ("Saloman") Symphony, or the *Lodoiska* overture, with more spirit and intelligence. As novelties, a gavotte by Giesse was introduced, and a new selection from *Martha*. The concert ended with Meyerbeer's "*Kronings March*." The singers were Mdme Norman, Miss Lena Law, Mdme and Mr Frith, and Signor Frassini. The solo performers were Mdme Barry Guido and Herr Hause (pianoforte), Herr Schneider (violin), and Herr Schubert (violoncello). The rooms were very full.

Impromptu for Christmas.\*  
Noël! Noël! Noël!

\* Copyright.

J. C. B.

#### MDLLE MARIMON AT NEW YORK.

(From the "New York World.")

Mdlle Marie Marimon, the Belgian *prima donna*, made her American debut at the Academy of Music last night in the part of Amina in Bellini's *La Sonnambula*. Her success was immediate and emphatic, and with Mdlle Gerster's Amina fresh in the memories of New York opera-goers, all the more remarkable. Whatever the friends of the Hungarian cantatrice we could not have this year may say of the artistic merits of the Belgian songstress we have, there could be no doubt as to her having won a great popular triumph. On her first appearance she was warmly welcomed, and as soon as she had sung the first air, "Come per me sereno," her qualities were recognised, and she was received with acclamations. She had already captured the house. She, however, declined the encore demanded, and went on at once with "Sorra il sen la man mi posa," which she sang with exquisite ease and finish. Her voice is pure, her execution faultless, her phrasing correct and intelligent. Mdlle Marimon is a thoroughly well-trained singer, a mature artist, not a dramatic soprano—that rarest of rare aves—but a lyric artist who comprehends and gives expression to the sentiment intended to be conveyed by the composer, both through her vocal and histrionic powers. At the end of the first act she was called three times before the curtain and almost bewildered by the innumerable bouquets presented to her. In the second act she made no phenomenal display of vocal skill, but, while adhering closely to the written text, succeeded by gestures and innocent expression in giving an admirable portraiture of the guileless Amina. The interest in her performance grew intense when, after crossing the treacherous bridge in safety, she came forward and sang the exquisite address to the faded flowers, "Ah! non credea," and culminated in absolute enthusiasm when she sang the final aria, "Ah! non giunge," not only with the brilliancy which the mere utterance of the rapid runs and trills necessitate, but with force, accent, and genuine passion. Compelled by a tremendous burst of applause to repeat the air, she varied it by introducing several new embellishments, and scattered her notes on the double and triple leger lines with generous profusion, touching the E flat several times with apparent ease and perfect clearness. When the curtain fell Mdlle Marimon was again called out and was literally pelted with bouquets from all parts of the house, while the audience rose and shouted until the *débutante* must have grown weary of bowing her acknowledgments.

Signor Campanini, the Elvino, shared with Mdlle Marimon the honours of the evening. He was in excellent voice and acted with his accustomed ease. Signor Del Puente as Il Conte Rodolfo, Signor Grazzi as Alessio, Signor Rinaldini as the Notary, Mdme Lablache as Teresa, and Mdlle Robiati as Lisa, all gave good support to the new *prima donna*.

10 TIMES 100'00 = 1000'000.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—In the footnote affixed to the letter of your correspondent, "Contralto," headed "Female Actors of Male Parts," you name several renowned dramatic singers who have assumed the character of the hero in various operas founded upon Shakspeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, but you omit one of the most renowned of them all, Sabina Heinemann; "but Homerus sometimes" snoring, why should not D. B. ?—Excuse and believe me, D. B. (*Linzt Louis im Zargon*).

P.S. No. 1.—What do you mean by "Lecocq's cocomic opera, *Cacamargo*?"

If Lecocq had intitled his opera simply *Camago*, we should have styled it "comic"; but as he intitled it *Cacamago*, we have styled it "co-comic."—D. B.

P.S. No. 2.—In your last number *ad vocem* Wagner you stated 1,000,000 marks is just the double of 100,000. Me Hercle! how is this?

See above. Lapsus calami.—D. B.

P.S. No. 3.—On the first page of your number of Dec. 20 I see the following advertisement:—"Mdme Marie Roze will sing Balfe's celebrated ballad on Dec. 13th!!!" &c. *Verbum sapienti*.

There are no "saps" in the *Musical World*. Dec. 13, 1880, was intended.—D. B.

Anton Rubinstein's *Thurm zu Babel* will be performed by Stern's Association in Berlin, on the 6th prox., the composer conducting. After conducting his opera, *Die Maccabäer*, at the Landestheater, Prague, he was presented with a silver laurel, &c.

## SCRAPS FROM PARIS.

Three years ago, M. Mierzwinski appeared at the Grand Opera as Raoul in *Les Huguenots*. A twelvemonth later he repeated the part and then vanished from Paris till the other day, when he re-appeared, at the same theatre, as Vasco de Gama in *L'Africaine*. Since his first *début* in the capital, he has been singing in the provinces, principally at Lyons and Marseilles, and has now got rid, to a great extent, of the ungraceful and awkward manner which threatened to be an insuperable obstacle to his success. His voice is much improved, especially in the higher notes. Still, the impression he produced fell short of what was expected. Another *début* has been that of Mlle Marie Vachot as the Queen in *Les Huguenots*. The young lady, daughter of a former manager of the Théâtre de la Monnaie, Brussels, has reason to be satisfied with the result she has achieved. She possesses a pleasing, clear voice, which she has learnt to turn to good account, as was shown by her execution of the grand air in the second act. In time, after she has gained more experience of the stage, she will no doubt occupy a good position in her profession.—M. Brabant, the chief machinist, or "master carpenter," is dead. He had filled several situations of a like kind before he was engaged in 1872 at the Opera by M. Halanzier. He was very clever in his particular department and much esteemed personally.

At the Opéra-Comique *L'Etoile du Nord* and *La Flûte enchantée* have alternated in the bills with *Lalla-Roukh*, *Fra Diavolo*, *Galatée*, and *Le Pré-aux-Clercs*. *Le Rendez-vous Bourgeois* and *Le Maçon* are in rehearsal. M. Carvalho has engaged Mlle Marie Vanza, late of Her Majesty's.

*La Fille du Tambour-Major*, the new three-act comic opera at the Folies Dramatiques, bids fair to enjoy a longish run, for, independently of the music by Jacques Offenbach, the book by MM. Chivot and Duru appeals to what always was and probably ever will be the quality which some term the weak, and others the strong, point in a Frenchman's character, namely: the love of military glory. The authors are considerably indebted for their story to that of *La Fille du Régiment*, and their heroine, Stella, is first sister to Marie, the heroine of the more ancient work. Monthabor, the Drum-Major, bears a strong resemblance to our old friend, Sergeant Sulpice, and the Duchess della Volta is exceedingly like Mad. de Birkenfeld. But there is a great deal about French courage and French invincibility: a liberal display of uniforms and tricolour flags; much marching and counter-marching; with an effective final scene representing the triumphal entry of the French army, to the strains of Méhul's "Chant du Départ," and under the command of the First Consul, into Milan. The music, if not altogether new, is melodious, sparkling, and well adapted to the situations and words it is intended to illustrate. The cast is quite a family affair, Mad. Girard-Max-Simon playing the heroine, Stella; Mad. Girard, her mother, formerly of the Opéra-Comique, appearing as the Duchess; and M. Max Simon sustaining the character of Bambini, a comic suitor for Stella's hand.

The grand Press Fête at the Hippodrome, for the benefit of the sufferers by the inundations in Spain, was, as most people are by this time aware, a tremendous success. Detailed accounts of the whole affair have been published in the papers, but, as the musical programme was omitted in some of these accounts, the following facts may interest the readers of the *Musical World*. The Fête commenced with a concert. An orchestra of two hundred musicians, conducted by M. Olivier Métra, performed in a spirited manner the overture to *La Muette*. Then came a "Marche Hongroise," by H. Kowaleki, and "La Mascarade," by Emile Artaud, performed on fifteen pianos, but the result was disappointing. The choruses of the Opera and of the Conservatory, under M. Cohen, sang the "Prayer" from *Moïse* and M. Cohen's *finale* to *Ether*. The band of the Garde Républicaine and the bands of two Spanish regiments took it in turns to play national marches, and Spanish singers executed several choral compositions. At midnight the concert terminated with the march from *Tannhäuser*. A noteworthy feature of the Fête was a special paper, *Paris-Muscie*, the existence of which was limited to one number. Among its contributors, including all kinds of celebrities, was Mad. Adelina Patti, who addressed the annexed letter to the editor:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am much puzzled by your request. You want me to tell you immediately and in some twenty lines what I feel when singing. Were you to grant me years and twenty volumes or

so, I might, perhaps, succeed, but I am not quite sure I should even then! The fact is I have never rendered myself an account of my emotions on such occasions. All I know is that, when my name appears in the bills, I am, from early morning, very anxious, nervous, and agitated; that, as the fatal hour of performance draws near, stage fright affects me more and more, and that, at the last moment, when I am about to leave my dressing-room to appear before the public, I am overcome by one sentiment: terrible fear. My emotions during the performance itself defy my powers of analysis. They are, according to the part, according to the artists singing with me, and according to my surroundings generally, of so varied a nature that it would be impossible to describe them to you. I should have to enter into minute details, which, however futile, sometimes make a strong impression on us. But, when everything is going well, I feel, to quote the charming lines of Agnès:—

'Des choses que jamais rien ne peut égaler,  
Et dont, toutes les fois que j'en entends parler,  
La douceur me chatouille, et là dedans remue  
Certain je ne sais quoi, dont je suis tout émue.'

"Ah! how true that is! Sometimes I no longer know what I am, or, as Mozart's librettist makes young Cherubino say:—

'Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio,  
Or di loco, ora sono di ghiaccio.'

"If, my dear Sir, I could sing instead of writing this, you would understand me much better, for, without presumption, I think I may assert that I manage my voice better than my pen. Believe me, my dear Sir, yours truly,  
ADELINA PATTI."

On Christmas Day, a Mass by M. Cherouvrier, Secretary-General of the Grand Opera, will be performed at the Madeleine, and one by M. César Franck at the Church of the Trinity.—Mad. Sinico's first appearance is fixed to take place at the first Ballad Concert at the Continental Hotel on Friday, 30th January. The concert is to be the first of a series of three.

## THE HUNTER'S FAREWELL.\*

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>The mountain breeze is on my brow,<br/>A longing in my breast:<br/>I have been happy here, but now<br/>No longer may I rest.<br/>You lofty peaks of dazzling snow,<br/>For them my soul doth pine:<br/>No hand can hold me here below,<br/>Though tender e'en as thine,<br/>My Dear,<br/>Though tender e'en as thine.</p> | <p>I fain would think in peril's hour,<br/>When danger's face I see,<br/>That thou, within thy sheltered bower,<br/>Dost give a thought to me.<br/>'Twould nerve my arm, and steel my heart,<br/>And make my step more sure,<br/>To know that I had still a part<br/>In thy remembrance pure,<br/>My Dear,<br/>In thy remembrance pure.</p> |
|--|---|

When I am gone, another's hand  
Shall dry those starting tears,  
A worthier by thy side shall stand  
Through all life's golden years.  
Thy gentle image shall remain  
Enshrined in memory still,  
But if the thought of me be pain,  
Forget me if you will,  
My Dear!  
Forget me if you will!

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JETTY VOGEL.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—The competition for the Potter Exhibition was held at this institution on Monday last. The examiners were Messrs Lunn, Walter Macfarren, Brinley Richards, and Sinton, Dr Steggall, and the Principal (chairman). There were nine candidates, and the scholarship was awarded to Richard Harvey Löhr. In the competition for the Thalberg Scholarship, with the same examiners, there were five candidates, and the scholarship was awarded to Percy Stranders. In the competition for the Westmoreland Scholarship, the examiners being the same, assisted by Signor Fiori, there were fifteen candidates, and the scholarship was awarded to Marian McKenzie. The competition for the Balfe Scholarship was held on Tuesday. The examiners were Messrs Banister, Brinley Richards, Dr Steggall, and the Principal (chairman). There were five candidates, and the scholarship was awarded to George J. Bennett.

## MDME SAINTON'S VOCAL ACADEMY.

Steinway Hall was crowded on Thursday evening with persons interested in the success of the vocal school carried on by Mdme Sainton-Dolby, the occasion being a somewhat special display of results. The accomplished lady who so long upheld the repute of native talent before the public lives her professional life again in the doings of those who perpetuate her method, and she naturally desires to claim, from time to time, the notices which is fairly her due. Hence the concerts now and then given at Steinway Hall, and hence, in particular, the performance of Thursday night. Both past and present pupils took a share in the proceedings, and among those who had already graduated with honours were Miss Adela Vernon, Miss Helen Meason, and Mdme Mary Cummings. It is hardly necessary to state how far artists more or less familiar with our concert rooms did credit to the instructress; but we may presume that each of the ladies above named made a special effort, and certainly results warranted the presumption. Miss Vernon was heard to advantage in Schumann's "Das Waldespräch" and Brahms' "Wiegenlied," obtaining a warm re-call, and deserving it by thoroughly artistic effort. Miss Meason, who always wins the good opinion of her audience, did so again in "Caro mio ben" and "Golden Days," bringing to the execution of both a musical voice and much intelligent expression; while Mdme Cummings gained a familiar success in Meyerbeer's "No, no, no." Mdme Sainton's present pupils were represented amongst the soloists by Mrs Whyte, Miss Damain, Miss Woodhatch, Miss Waters, Miss Blackwell, and Miss Arthur, all of whom, in some degree or other, gave promise of future excellence. Among them, in right of actual achievement as of marked ability, Miss Damain shone as a star. We have several times praised the unquestionable talent and skill of this young lady, and now it is an agreeable duty to do so again, with added emphasis. Alike in Handel's "Up the dreadful steep ascending," and Mdme Sainton's pretty new ballad, "Yes," Miss Damain showed qualities of a very high order—such, indeed, as cannot fail, with ordinary good luck, to lift her far above the rank and file of her profession. Miss Arthur displayed considerable brilliancy and force of style in "Bel raggio," and Miss Waters satisfied the demands which "From mighty Kings" makes upon fluency of execution. Miss Woodhatch made an encouraging debut with "Angels ever bright and fair," and Miss Blackwell strove earnestly to justify her choice of such an exacting piece as "Non mi dir." Altogether the performances were very encouraging, and proved that Mdme Sainton continues to render valuable service to the art of which she is still an ornament. The proceedings were diversified by the pianoforte solos of Miss Margaret Gyde, R.A.M., and those played on the violin by Mr William Sutton, who, as the pupil of M. Sainton, bids fair to do great credit to his master. M. Sainton conducted the concerted music, and Messrs Lindsay Sloper and Leipold were at the pianoforte.—D. T.

## DINNER, DRAMA, WAGNER, &amp;c.

The practice of dining and the habit of theatre-going have generally come to be looked upon as all but irreconcilable; and a correspondent of *La Bibliothèque Universelle* suggests that the interests of the cook and of the actor would both be advanced by a return to earlier dramatic performances, followed by repasts which might be looked upon either as late dinners or as early suppers. As the world grows older the hours of breakfasting, dining, and supping—or of breakfasting, lunching, and dining—are retarded; and the correspondent of *La Bibliothèque Universelle* has ascertained—or thinks he has ascertained—that, by a regular programme, meal times become about an hour later every twenty or thirty years. In London people dine later even than in Paris, and the constant postponement of the dinner hour is really as difficult to account for in the case of one capital as in that of the other. Foreigners can never sufficiently express their astonishment at the fact of the London season taking place during the summer months; whilst in Paris, as in Vienna and Berlin, in New York as in St Petersburg, the period of the so-called "season" is invariably the winter. This, however, may be explained by the national taste, or rather passion, for field sports. The fox cannot be hunted, the partridge and pheasant cannot be shot, while the crops are still growing; and it has, accordingly, been arranged that the months devoted to the pursuit of pleasure shall be those in which nothing else can be followed. A taste for sport is not unknown in France and Germany; but the French and Germans do not seem to have that ambition which so many Englishmen entertain to lead every kind of life—that of the moor and the cope, of the land and the sea, of the country and the town. With the exception of a few fashionable "sportsmen," as they are called—who love nothing in "sport" so

much as its costume—there are comparatively few men to be found on the continent who combine a liking for fashionable gaities with a fancy for the destruction of wild animals.

Our summer season has, from an English point of view, its *raison d'être*. But it would be difficult to arrive at the *rationale* of the English dinner hour. Parliament has nothing to do with it, for it would be impossible to dine before the hour at which Parliament meets, and out of the question to wait until its sittings—of such uncertain duration, and, as a rule, so terribly prolonged—come to an end. Still less is it regulated by the theatres; for to dine at what is considered a becoming hour, and go to the play the same evening, might be difficult, while to dine and go to the play in time for the commencement of the performance would be impossible. There is something, no doubt, to be said for Herr Wagner's view of dramatic and musico-dramatic representations, which he would, from time to time, make the principal business of the day's occupation, subjecting to these all other things, including even dinner. But this is too heroic a view of the matter for every-day life. We desire, no doubt, to be elevated by theatrical performances. But we wish also to be entertained, and we do not object on occasion to being merely amused by them. As, however, our life is now arranged, we can only witness them in the most fragmentary shape, unless we are prepared to sacrifice to them the principal meal of the day. At present, little concessions are made on both sides. Determined playgoers dine an hour or two earlier than usual, and, even then, do not always succeed in getting to the theatre in time for the beginning of the entertainment. Managers, on their side, begin the performances by presenting insignificant little pieces, which it is rather an advantage not to see—so that when, after a hurried meal, the fashionable patron of dramatic art arrives at the theatre, an hour or so after the rising of the curtain, he has really lost nothing. Dramatists, too, have found it necessary to reckon with the terrible question of the dinner hour. In many a French comedy of the present day the first act might fairly be called the dinner act. The piece is so constructed that the plot can be quite as well understood whether the introductory or expository scenes have been witnessed or not. Heine said of literary women that they wrote with one eye on the paper and the other on some man; and of some of the very best of modern French dramatists it may be asserted that, in preparing their first acts, they have one eye upon those who will be in the theatre and who will hear it, and another on those who will be at dinner and who will miss it altogether. For the benefit of the latter, all that has taken place in view of the audience during the progress of the first act is recapitulated in the second. Not un mindful of the Horatian precept, that the mind is less actively moved by what is transmitted through the ears than by what is presented to the eyes, the author places himself on the safest possible ground by first exhibiting incidents and afterwards narrating them.

In the interest of the stage, of good cookery, and of sound digestion, it is to be hoped that means may be discovered for bringing about an understanding between diners and dramatists, so that the latter may not find themselves compelled to write two first acts, while the former will not be called upon to leave the dinner table without waiting for the desert. No compromise, however, seems possible. Either the piece or the banquet must give way; and the correspondent of the *Bibliothèque Universelle* seems to think that the solution of the difficulty may be found in the system of "dramatic *matinées*" introduced but lately into Paris, but established for years past in London. The correspondent is possibly right in thinking that the number of morning performances will go on increasing until, after a time, the regular hours for dramatic representations will be, not as at present, from seven or eight in the evening until eleven, but from two or three in the afternoon until five or six. Then, after having visited a theatre and listened to a dramatic performance from beginning to end, the contented amateur may be able to dine in peace at seven or eight o'clock. It is not very easy, however, to see how this system will suit those numerous persons—the great bulk of the population—who are at work all day until six or seven o'clock in the evening, and who are never free in the afternoon except on a Saturday. For the sort of people who attend afternoon concerts, afternoon dramatic representations are, of course, admirably suited. They are convenient, too, for visitors from the country who are devoting their time in London exclusively to sight-seeing, and for dwellers in the country who wish, once in a way, to see a highly successful piece at some London theatre and return home the same night. But the afternoon can never be the theatre-going time for the public in general; and, in opposition to the suggestion made by the correspondent of the *Bibliothèque Universelle*—that all theatrical representations shall take place between the hours of two and six, it would be advisable to consider a proposition made, some time ago, by M. Sarcy, to the effect that performances should be brought to

an end rather sooner than at present, and that we should return to the ancient custom of supping after the play. The managers might give some help in this matter if they would so arrange their programmes that the trivial little pieces which are now, at many theatres, performed immediately after the rising of the curtain were played just before its fall. Thus the sort of piece which, under present circumstances, we do not mind losing for the sake of our dinner would be dispensed with in the interest of supper. At our lyrical theatres, a ballet or divertissement is sometimes played after the opera, and, as a rule, scarcely any one waits to see it. That is precisely what would happen if the little one-act works which are now offered under the name of *levers de rideau* were presented as *chutes de rideau*. But it would still be necessary to alter the dinner hour, and between a change in meal-time for a small class and a change in the working habits of the whole working population of the country it is easy to decide what is most likely to be brought about. For the present, however, it may be doubtful whether either the plan recommended by the correspondent of the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, or that advocated by M. Sarcey, will be adopted. Changes in habits can only take place very gradually. If, however, as the writer to the *Bibliothèque* maintains, the dinner hour gets an hour later every twenty years, the end of the century will see our children dining at nine o'clock, and the early part of the next century our grandchildren dining at ten. The latter, without knowing it, will in fact be supping: and if, before supping, they should now and again pay a visit to an early play-house, they might be furnished with more subjects for conversation than characterise the modern dining-table.—S. S.

#### WHY DO I LOVE THEE? \*

Why do I love thee? Ah, I cannot tell;  
The source of that with which my soul is rife—  
I only feel the magic of the spell  
Which thou hast cast around my all of life;  
And know but this, that I do love thee more  
Than heart, I think, hath ever loved before!  
Not for thine eyes, sweet lustrous, soft and bright,  
Not for thy tresses' sheen of tawny gold,  
Not for the veillings steep'd in starry light,  
Of beauty that thy fairy form enfold.  
I know not whence it comes, this spell of bliss,  
That lives just in thy smile, thy voice, thy kiss.  
It may be, 'tis because thou art my own,  
The being whose pure soul is link'd with mine,  
Round whom my strength of fullest trust is thrown,  
In faith so perfect that it is divine.  
With thee beside me I have but one thought,  
The wondrous gladness that thy love hath wrought!  
The sunshine streams upon our path to-day—  
We revel in it, thanking God for this;  
So I just lend to Joy's star-scepter'd sway,  
And bless the father of Love's holy bliss!  
Some day the reason we shall learn above,  
Why thou dost love me—why I thee so love!

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A SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER.

LONDON BALLAD CONCERTS.—The last of the ante-Christmas Ballad Concerts took place on Wednesday, when a crowded audience was assembled to hear the selection, formed mainly of familiar compositions. The artists were Mme Edith Wynne, Miss Mary Davies, Miss Marian McKenzie, and Miss Orridge; Messrs Santley, Maybrick, Seligmann, Edward Lloyd, and Sims Reeves. Mme Arabella Goddard played two gavottes, by Handel and Rameau, and De Sivrai's fantasia on Scotch airs, "Balmoral," her brilliant execution, as usual, eliciting the warmest encomiums. Mr Sims Reeves was in grand voice, and was so completely master of his means as to accept an encore in both of his songs—"The Pilgrim of Love" and "Tom Bowling." Mr Reeves must be made of tougher material than the generality of people give him credit for, to be able to stand against this awful weather—more trying to a vocalist than to any one else. Long life and good luck to him for the prince of tenors! Mme Antoinette Sterling did not appear, but the hiatus in the programme was filled up by extra songs given by Miss Orridge and Miss McKenzie. Mr Santley, Mr Maybrick, and Mr Lloyd were all in admirable form, and nothing loth to give the audience double their money's worth. The London Vocal Union, as usual, put in an appearance. A morning Ballad Concert is announced for January 3, by Mr Boosey.—*Daily News*.

#### WAIFS.

It is proposed to erect another theatre at Nice.  
Signor Faccio has returned from Madrid to Milan.  
M. Salomon, of the Grand Opera, Paris, is singing at Marseilles.  
Henri Vieuxtemps has again selected Algeria for winter quarters.  
Theodor Wachtel has been singing at the Stadttheater, Mayence.  
Mdm Pappenheim is engaged at the Imperial Theatre, Warsaw.  
Mlle D'Angeri is engaged for twenty nights at the Teatro Real, Madrid.

The Liceo, Barcelona, will shortly open, under the direction of Quintili-Leoni.

Ernst Frank is acting temporarily as conductor at the Theatre Royal, Hanover.

A new journal, *Rivista nuova di Scienze, Lettere, ed Arti*, has appeared in Rome.

E. Perelli is appointed to the post left vacant by the late Bona in the Milan Conservatory.

Max Bruch's *Odysseus* was recently performed at a concert of the Musical Union, Eisenach.

Mad. Ristori, the great tragic actress, has appeared three times at the Teatro Dal Verme, Milan.

Gialdino Gialdini succeeds Faccio as conductor at the Teatro Real, Madrid. (How about Bottesini?)

Ch. Lecocq's buffo opera, *La Camargo*, has been brought out at the Wilhelmstädtisches Theater, Berlin.

Anton Rubinstein's *Nero* will be produced, under his own superintendence, at the Imperial Opera, Vienna.

Anton Rubinstein, who recently passed through Paris on his way to Rome, is expected at Berlin in January.

Mme Albani will appear for a few nights, towards the end of the Carnival season, at the Teatro Reggio, Turin.

Maurice Grau has initiated a new series of French buffo opera in New York. (Ever so long since.—DR BLIDGE.)

A four-act opera, *Jean Chevalier*, is in rehearsal at the Ducal Theatre, Coburg, where the composer, A. Langert, conducts.

The receipts at the first performance of *Aida* by Mr Mapleson's company in New York amounted to 8,000 dollars. (Glad on't.—DR BLIDGE.)

The German Theatre, Pesth, was recently put up for auction, but as no one would give the offered price, 308,837 florins, 50 kreutzers, it will be re-put up on the 15th prox.

Fears were entertained a short time since that Mad. Szarwady would lose the use of a finger in consequence of a whitlow. These have luckily proved groundless, but the famous pianist will not be able to carry out her projected tour in Germany.

The following new operas will be produced in Italy this winter: *Sardanapolo* (Libano), Teatro Apollo, Rome; *Elda* (Catalani), Teatro Regio, Turin; and *Il Figliuol prodigo* (Ponchielli), Scala, Milan. (When shall we have some Ponchielli?—DR BLIDGE.)

We learn from *The Parisian* that a deaf mute has used the new audiphone. "Can you pay me that five dollars?" were the first words he heard. "I prefer to remain in my original condition" said he, sternly, and throwing the audiphone out of the window. (How could he say anything "sternly," being mute?—DR BLIDGE.)

MILAN.—The official programme of the Scala has appeared for the Carnival and Lent season. The operas will be *Il Figliuol Prodigo* (new), and *Gioconda* (Ponchielli); *Aida*, *Rigoletto*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. There are two grand ballets promised: *Delia* and *Morgano*, the first by Pallerini, the second by Taglioni. The regular company will include Signore de Reszke, Pozzoni-Anastasi, Liszt, Leavington, Beloff; Signori Aramburo, Marconi, Medica, Marescalchi, Ordinas, Rapp, Manfredi, and de Serini, with Sig. Faccio as conductor. Mad. Albani is engaged for three "extraordinary representations."

MADRID.—Mme Christine Nilsson's next part at the Royal Opera House, Madrid, is to be Mignon in the popular work of M. Ambroise Thomas. Signor Faccio, the *chef d'orchestre*, and M. Lasalle, leading baritone at the Royal Opera House, have been compelled to leave Madrid, the former for Milan, in order to resume his position as conductor at the Scala; the latter for Paris, where his services as an important member of M. Vaucorbeil's company are in immediate request. M. Lasalle's engagement was 40,000 francs for two months, but, owing to circumstances, the management were only able to invite his assistance for three occasions; he is, nevertheless, paid in full. It is said that Bottesini, the unrivalled contrabassist, will take the place of Faccio at the head of the orchestra. [No such good luck for Madrid.—DR BLIDGE.]

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